Local backing called key to new plan

Alternative aims to end feuding

By **Rich Laden**
Gazette Telegraph

An effort to draft an alternative to Amendment 2 needs to muster broad support in Colorado Springs over the next several days or it could die just as it's getting started, backers warned Thursday.

Their proposal -- which would ban discrimination against homosexuals without granting them so-called "special rights" — will be submitted to state officials Feb. 15. That would trigger a lengthy review by the state, followed by a citizen-initiated petition drive, before the measure could be placed on a statewide ballot in November.

But before they go any further, backers of the new plan say they need concrete support from local residents on both sides of Amendment 2 — many of whom have argued bitterly over the measure. If they don't get support in Colorado Springs, where Amendment 2 was born and where it passed by a 2-1 margin, backers concede there's little hope the rest of the state can be convinced a consensus can be reached on an alternative.

"If two weeks from now, (we) are the only people supporting this amendment, you can write it off," said attorney Greg Walta, who is still completing the alternative plan. He was joined at a news conference by Marvin Strait, who heads one of the city's more prominent accounting firms.

Their alternative plan is aimed at ending what they say is constant feuding among Colorado Springs residents since Amendment 2 was passed by 53 percent of the vote Nov. 3. The measure bans laws protecting gays from discrimination based on sexual orientation. However, a Denver judge last month blocked Amendment 2 from taking effect until a trial later this year to determine its constitutionality.

Amendment 2 supporters say it doesn't discriminate and only makes certain that homosexuals do not receive "special rights." Gays, lesbians and other Amendment 2 opponents, however, say the measure legalizes discrimination.

"This community really is starting to have a lot of acrimony," Strait said. "There are great differences of opinion by people who used to work together."

The alternative plan — banning discrimination against gays and lesbians while denying them " special rights" — is an attempt to reach a middle ground. If the alternative plan gets on the ballot and is passed, Amendment 2 would be repealed and the new version would be

See **COMPROMISE**/A3

Mark Reis/Gazette Telegraph

Attorney Greg Walta fields questions Thursday in Colorado Springs at a news conference at which he unveiled a draft of an alternative to Amendment 2. The proposal will be presented to state officials Feb. 15.

REACTION

"My board has not yet reviewed it, so I don't know what the official stance of the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) will be. But, it being from (Colorado Springs), it could be very helpful and go a long way in showing that there are problems with Amendment 2."

— James Joy, executive director of the Colorado chapter of the ACLU.

"Since it is from Colorado Springs, it will mean that it will be under much greater scrutiny from people and groups. But, so far, and I only have an outdated version of the proposal, it does appear to be a sincere attempt."

—Tony Ogden, acting director of Equality Colorado, an anti-Amendment 2 group in Denver.

Cherished bread

Bosnian women check the freshness of the bread they bought with ration coupons Thursday in Sarajevo. A U.N. relief convoy was moving toward the besieged capital amid warnings that the city's food supplies could be depleted within three days. WORLD/**A8**

BUSINESS

▶ **NEW AIR SERVICE:** Two major airlines have added nonstop flights out of Colorado Springs. United Airlines said this week that it will add a second nonstop flight to Chicago beginning Wednesday. Earlier, TWA had said it was cutting the Denver leg out of its Colorado Springs-St. Louis flight, making the trip nonstop./**C7**

SCENE

▶ **JAZZ SENSE:** Jazz vocalist Joe Williams may not have had the public recognition he deserves, but he has solid respect from the industry./**E1**

LIFESTYLE

▶ **MORE THAN SILLY LOVE SONGS:** Songs evoke all kinds of emotions, and Tales from the Front readers reveal which songs bring back good

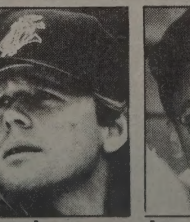
television's guidelines where actors do not smoke unless smoking is essential to the role.

Lee on campus

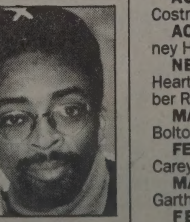
Spike Lee appeared at a university in Amherst, Mass., that has endured racial unrest and urged his listeners not to give up before they finish their education. "Get a degree, get as much as you can, and get the hell out of Dodge," Lee, director of "Do the Right Thing," "Malcolm X" and other films, told about 2,300 students Wednesday at the University of Massachusetts.

Scorpio in jail

Tristan Rogers, the Australian actor who played the character Robert Scorpio on the ABC soap opera "General Hospital," faces up to six months in jail after being convicted Wednesday of drunken driving in Beverly Hills, Calif. He is to be sentenced Feb. 10. He has a previous conviction for drunken driving and will spend at least two days in jail, said Deputy District Attorney Bill Clark. Clark also said Rogers' license will be suspended for one year and he will participate in an 18-month alcohol awareness program.



Howard
Targeted by anti-smoking



Lee
Encourages college students to

Jack Nicholson, Michelle Pfeiffer, Roseanne Arnold and **Bill Cosby** were among the performers nominated Wednesday for the 19th annual People's Choice Awards. The top vote-getters were determined by a Gallup Poll of more than 5,000 people. Winners will be announced March 9.

The nominees:

TV COMEDY SERIES: "Cheers," "Home Improvement," "Roseanne."

TV DRAMATIC SERIES: "In the Heat of the Night," "Knots Landing," "L.A. Law."

NEW TV COMEDY SERIES: "Hearts Afire," "Mad About You," "Martin."

NEW TV DRAMATIC SERIES: "Going to Extremes," "Melrose Place," "Picket Fences."

TV DAYTIME SERIAL: "All My Children," "Days of Our Lives," "The Young and the Restless."

MALE TV PERFORMER: Tim Allen, Bill Cosby, Jerry Seinfeld.

FEMALE TV PERFORMER: Roseanne Arnold, Candice Bergen, Angela Lansbury.

MOTION PICTURE: "A Few Good Men," "Aladdin," "Malcolm X."

COMEDY MOTION PICTURE: "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York," "Sister Act," "The Distinguished Gentleman."

DRAMATIC MOTION PICTURE: "A Few Good Men," "Malcolm X," " The Bodyguard."

MOTION PICTURE ACTOR: Kevin Costner, Mel Gibson, Jack Nicholson.

MOTION PICTURE ACTRESS: Whoopi Goldberg, Demi Moore, Michelle Pfeiffer.

ACTOR IN A COMEDY FILM: Steve Martin, Eddie Murphy, Robin Williams.

ACTRESS IN A COMEDY FILM: Whoopi Goldberg, Goldie Hawn, Bette Midler.

ACTOR IN A DRAMATIC FILM: Kevin Costner, Tom Cruise, Jack Nicholson.

ACTRESS IN A DRAMATIC FILM: Whitney Houston, Demi Moore, Sharon Stone.

NEW MUSIC VIDEO: "Achy Breaky Heart," "I Will Always Love You," "November Rain."

MALE MUSICAL PERFORMER: Michael Bolton, Garth Brooks, Eric Clapton.

FEMALE MUSICAL PERFORMER: Mariah Carey, Whitney Houston, Reba McEntire.

MALE COUNTRY MUSIC PERFORMER: Garth Brooks, Billy Ray Cyrus, Randy Travis.

FEMALE COUNTRY MUSIC PERFORMER: Wynonna Judd, Reba McEntire, Dolly Parton.

Gazette Telegraph news services

John Sarau, 29, was arrested last week and charged with robbing a Commonwealth Federal Savings Bank in Pennsylvania of more than $14,000. He was held without bail pending arraignment.

According to the FBI, a dye pack inserted in the money exploded as he ran from the bank. Exploding dye packs are used to mark stolen money.

The FBI said Sarau and a girlfriend directed the cab from Runnemede, N.J., to the bank in North Wales Township, northwest of Philadelphia.

The cab driver, whose name was not given, then drove them to a motel in Philadelphia, where she was paid the $125 fare — but no tip.

Keno

THURSDAY NIGHT'S NUMBERS:

9	11	13	17
19	27	29	30
31	34	36	41
44	45	46	52

Compromise/Common ground sought

From A1

substituted.

But if Walta and Strait hope to garner support by Feb. 15, they might have a long road to travel.

Colorado for Family Values, the Springs-based group that launched Amendment 2, already has indicated it will oppose any change.

Meanwhile, Amendment 2 opponents had a mixed response. Generally, they praised Walta's sincerity in wanting to end the Amendment 2 controversy. Yet, some say the new plan still appears to single out gays and lesbians for treatment different from heterosexuals.

"You don't see any other groups with these kind of restrictions," said Pat Steadman, an attorney working with the Colorado Legal Initiative Project, which is handling the lawsuit seeking to overturn Amendment 2. The group hasn't officially endorsed or panned Walta's proposal.

Ground Zero, a Springs-based group that opposes Amendment 2, said the proposal has merit but also needs more study. In any case, the group said it supports the effort to achieve common ground.

Besides the bickering in the community, Amendment 2 also is threatening the city's economy, Walta and Strait said.

Several groups already have canceled meetings in Colorado, including the U.S. Conference of Mayors, which last month moved its June convention from Colorado Springs to New York City.

But Walta and Strait also fear that high-profile employers will think about moving out of Colorado Springs or won't relocate here if Amendment 2 remains on the books.

"I don't think we're going to be drawing world-class businesses or conventions or anything to this community until we show them that we've stopped arguing," Walta said.

Supporters hope to get their proposal on a statewide ballot in November, although a question remains whether that's possible.

Some people believe Amendment 1, the state's new tax-limitation measure, allows any type of ballot question to go before voters in odd-numbered years. However, some state officials say only tax questions could go on a 1993 ballot and that other issues would have to wait until 1994.

But "it would be disastrous for us to be in this situation for another year," Walta said.

40% OFF ORIG.

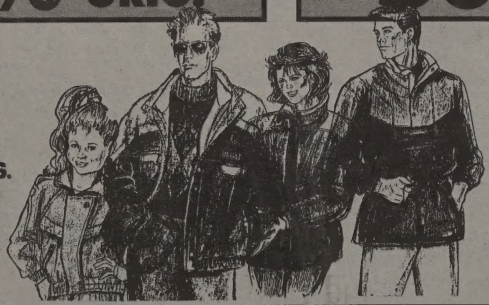
50% OFF ORIG.

COLTECH

JUPA

edelweiss.

BOULDER GEAR



Sportina

AND ENTIRE STOCK OF KIDS SKIWEAR

3 AD #930602

* NOT ALL BRANDS AVAILABLE AT ALL STORES

AH, WYOMING AND IDAHO FOR OVER 60 YEARS.

USE YOUR CREDIT

DOWNTOWN
106 NORTH TEJON

CHAPEL HILLS MALL

LOCATIONS, INCLUDING OUR PUEBLO STORE

COLORADO SPRINGS
RUSTIC HILLS MINICASTLE-

S, SIZES OR COLORS AVAILABLE AT ALL STORES. A FEW FRANCHISE ITEMS EXCLUDED.